

REMARKS

In the outstanding Official Action, the Examiner:

(1) rejected claims 1, 3, 7, 11, 18 and 19 under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Takeda (U.S. Patent No. 5,455,710) in view of Cheng et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,936,486);

(2) objected to claims 2, 4-6, 8-10, 12, 13, 20 and 21 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but indicated that these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims; and

(3) allowed claims 14-17.

Turning first to Item 3 above, Applicants thank the Examiner for his indication that claims 14-17 are allowed.

In response to Item 1 above, Applicants have canceled claims 1, 18 and 19 without prejudice, in order to expedite issuance of the subject matter deemed allowable by the Examiner. Applicants expressly reserve the right to prosecute all canceled subject matter in related applications.

In response to Item 2 above, Applicants have amended claims 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 13 and 20-21 to rewrite these claims in independent form, including all of the limitations of the base claim.

Applicants have also amended claims 3, 7 and 11 so that they are no longer dependent on a rejected base claim.

Accordingly, Applicants believe that claims 2-17, 20 and 21 are now in condition for allowance, and allowance thereof is respectfully requested.

In the event that any additional fees may be required in this matter, please charge the same, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 16-0221.

Thank you.

Respectfully submitted,



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AHURA-0607